



Brussels, 8 May 2013

Background¹
AGRICULTURE and FISHERIES COUNCIL
Brussels, 13 and 14 May 2013

The Council meeting will address agricultural and fisheries matters; it will start at 10.00 on Monday 13 May 2013 and will continue on Tuesday 14 May. The Council will be chaired by Mr Simon COVENEY, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

*As regards agriculture, ministers will be briefed in public on the state of play of the trilogues on the **reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP)**.*

*Concerning fisheries issues, the Council will hold a public debate on the outcome of the trilogues on the **reform of the common fisheries policy (CFP)**. Ministers will in particular debate on a possible adjustment of the negotiating mandate to finalise the discussions with the other EU institutions on the **basic regulation of the CFP**.*

*Finally, the ministers will be briefed on **the North East Atlantic mackerel stock, and a global summit on oceans**.*

A first press conference on agriculture will be organised at lunch time the first day of the meeting (+/- 12h30). A second press conference on fisheries issues will take place at the end of the second day of the meeting.

The public events and the press conferences can be followed by video streaming:

<http://video.consiliums.europa.eu>

Video coverage of the event will be available for preview and download in broadcast quality (MPEG4) at www.eucouncil.tv

Photos of the event can be found in our photographic library at www.consilium.europa.eu/photo where they can be downloaded in high resolution.

¹ This note has been drawn up under the responsibility of the press office.

AGRICULTURE

Reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP)

Ministers will be briefed on the state of play of trilogues between the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission on the reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP). The trilogues are covering the four main texts of the CAP reform:

- the proposal for a regulation establishing rules for direct payments to farmers ([15396/3/11](#)). The direct payment regulation seeks to better target support for specific actions, areas or beneficiaries, as well as to pave the way for convergence of the support level within and across member states;
- the proposal for a regulation establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products ([15397/2/11](#)). The single common market organisation (CMO) regulation aims to streamline, expand and simplify the current provisions on public intervention, private storage, exceptional or emergency measures and aid to specific sectors, as well as to facilitate cooperation through producer and inter-branch organisations.
- the proposal for a regulation on support for rural development (rural development regulation) ([15425/1/11](#)). The rural development regulation covers voluntary measures for rural development, adapted to national and regional specificities, whereby member states draw up and co-finance multiannual programmes within a common framework in cooperation with the EU;
- the proposal for a regulation on the financing, management and monitoring of the CAP (horizontal regulation) ([15426/1/11](#)). The horizontal regulation lays down rules concerning expenditure, the farm advisory system, the management and control systems to be put in place by member states, the cross-compliance system and the clearance of accounts

In March, the Council reached agreement on a general approach on the reform of the CAP ([8005/13](#); [7183/13](#), [7329/13](#), [7303/13](#), [7304/13](#); [7539/13](#) + [ADD1](#)). This general approach constituted a political agreement in the Council on the CAP reform package enabling negotiations to be launched between the Council, the Parliament and the Commission with a view to a political agreement in June this year.

The European Parliament voted on its position at first reading on the CAP reform package on 13 March 2013.

On the last Council meeting in April, ministers were briefed on the state of play of the first trilogue discussions with the European Parliament and the Commission.

FISHERIES

FISHERIES

Reform of the common fisheries policy (CFP)

The Council will hold a public debate on the outcome of the ongoing trilogue discussions with the European Parliament and the Commission on two proposals within the reform of the common fisheries policy (CFP).

- Proposal for a regulation on the CFP ([12514/11](#)) replacing the basic provisions of the CFP (basic regulation);
- Proposal for a regulation on the common organisation of the markets (CMO) in fishery and aquaculture products ([12516/11](#)), focusing on market policy issues (market regulation);

Basic regulation

Following five trilogues on the CFP basic regulation, the Presidency is now seeking a revised negotiating mandate to finalise the discussions with the other institutions on this issue ([8987/13](#)).

This negotiating mandate was established following the general approach finalised at the Council meeting in February 2013. The April Council meeting held an orientation debate on the core issues of the negotiations, namely Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY), landing obligation, regionalisation and capacity management. Using the outcome of the debate, the Presidency listed the following elements of the mandate needed to be finalised at Council level:

Maximum Sustainable Yield and related fishing opportunities arrangements with third countries, and progress reports (Articles 2(2), 16 (2), 42a, 58b); Multi-annual plans (Articles 9 and 10); obligation to land (Article 15); Fishing opportunities (Article 16); Regionalisation (Article 17); Fishing capacity management (Articles 34 and 34a); Composition of Advisory Councils (Annex III point 2a). In addition, the following issues could merit orientation from Council: Expert Group on Compliance (Article 46a); Protected Areas (Article 7a).

The Council reached agreement on a general approach on the basic provisions of the CFP on 26 February this year ([11322/1/12](#)). The European Parliament voted on its position at the plenary session on 6 February. This enabled negotiations to be launched between the Council, the Parliament and the Commission in mid-March.

Market regulation

During the three trilogues discussions on market regulation which have taken place since the end of February, the positions of the Council and the European Parliament converged towards compromises on the great majority of political and technical issues ([8988/13](#)).

The main outstanding issues concern the mandatory consumer information (Articles 42 to 44) and delegated acts (Articles 24, 33, 41 and 46).

After a policy debate held on 19 March 2012, the Council agreed on a general approach for the market regulation ([10415/12](#)) on 12 June 2012. The European Parliament voted its first-reading position for this regulation on 12 September 2012.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

North East Atlantic mackerel and changes in stock distribution

The United Kingdom would like to hear from the Commission on its intentions regarding the imposition of trade sanctions to Iceland and the Faroe Islands concerning the management of the North East Atlantic mackerel stock.

Since 2008, there is a recurring dispute on the management of the North-East Atlantic mackerel stock between the EU on one hand and Iceland and the Faroe Islands on the other. Iceland and the Faroe Islands have set unilateral fishing quotas, refusing previous sharing arrangements negotiated between Coastal States (EU, Norway, Iceland, Faroe islands).

This issue has been discussed at several occasions in the agriculture & fisheries Council at the request of members states affected by the failure of negotiations between the EU, Iceland and the Faroe Islands. A legal instrument on trade sanctions to tackle this kind of situation has been adopted by the Council and the European Parliament in September 2012.

Global Oceans Action Summit

Ministers will be briefed by the Dutch delegation on a Global Oceans Action Summit for food security and blue growth, which will take place from 9 – 13 September 2013 in The Hague ([8916/13](#)).

The main objectives of this summit are:

- Review action priorities to sustainably generate increased productivity for food security and for growth in the context of healthy oceans in a changing climate;
 - Showcase innovative project solutions and action partnerships amongst a wide range of stakeholders on replicable blue growth models for scaling-up action in: sustainable fisheries and aquaculture; watershed, pollution and coastal habitat management; and coastal and maritime industries including tourism;
 - Mobilize investments from all sources for scaled-up action and transformational change including through the launch of a new Financial Mechanism;
 - Present a prototype Oceans Knowledge Portal to build partnerships and knowledge on solutions for blue growth;
 - Mobilize broad support for the optimal positioning of Oceans in the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda.
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